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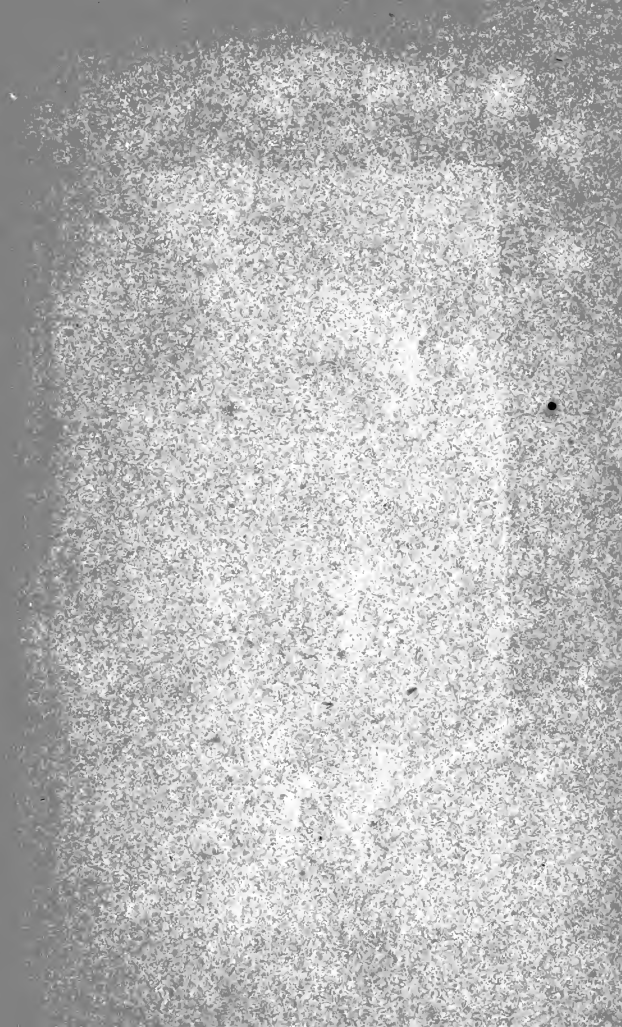
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They overheard one of these boys remark sneeringly to the teacher, there go the Saints.”

p. 31.

ALICE ROSEDALE,

OR THE

P O W E R

OF A

CONSISTENT CHRISTIAN LIFE.

BY

MRS. CAROLINE L. BLAKE.



PHILADELPHIA :

PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION.

NO. 821 CHESTNUT STREET.

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## ALICE ROSEDALE.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### HOME INFLUENCES.

NESTLED down amid embowering shrubbery and over-hanging trees, near the margin of a crystal streamlet, stood the substantial farm house at Riverside, in which the little Alice Rosedale first opened her blue eyes to the light of day.

Onward through the valley the windings of the silver stream were marked by rich and fertile vales, while in the blue distance the cloud-

capped summits of lofty mountains embraced the azure sky.

Nature had been lavish of its charms around her quiet home, and from her earliest childhood Alice had a just appreciation of the beautiful. Long before she learned to look "through nature up to nature's God," she had often felt the deepest admiration in gazing upon the starry heavens, and the ever varying beauties of earth. Her mother was a devoted follower of the meek and lowly Jesus. Prayerfully she received this child as from the Lord, and most earnestly she desired that her life might be devoted to his service. When in her youthful days Mrs. Rosedale accompanied her husband to the beautiful home we have

described, she saw not a Father's hand in all her joy, for she was without God and without hope in the world; but affliction came—the lovely babe which was first sent to gladden her heart sickened and died, and then in the darkness and agony of her crushing sorrow she found she had not made provision for the hour of adversity. Her proud heart rebelled against the hand which had smitten her in love, and she asked impatiently, “What have I *done* that I should suffer thus?” Like the young man in the gospel, she felt that she had kept the law from her youth; and she had been so long accustomed to compare her outward conduct with that of other people, and especially with that of some

professing Christians, and had felt so confident that she was not a great sinner, that her conscience had almost ceased to trouble her, and she felt *sure* of heaven. Many deceive themselves in this fearful manner, until the grave opens before them; but Mrs. Rosedale was most mercifully aroused to see her character in its true light. The Holy Spirit was striving with her to convince her of sin; and one evening, as she was reading the sermon on the mount, the truth reached her heart, and she saw herself, in the light of that sacred moral code, a lost and ruined sinner. This conviction was so deep and abiding that she almost despaired of mercy; yet in the depth of her anguish she



was assisted to grasp the only link connecting us with heaven, salvation through the atonement of the great Sacrifice. Then old things passed away, all things became new, and Mrs. Rosedale was a changed being. Henceforth everything was regarded in the light of eternity, and all that she did she endeavoured to do for the glory of God. Her companion was a man of business—a man of the world. He could not understand the change that had taken place in his wife, and her faithful efforts for his best good were extremely annoying to him, therefore she ceased to speak to him upon the subject nearest her heart, but, often did the silent midnight witness most fervent prayers for his conversion. Alice

Rosedale was indeed favoured above most children in the faithful instructions of such a mother. To her infant mind right views of life were given, of the life that now is and of that which is to come. Daily her mother took her away to her quiet chamber and commended her in prayer to God. It seems comparatively easy for the mind of a child to be drawn by the cords of love to Christ, because bad habits have far less power to influence than in after years. Many times in her childhood, Alice was almost persuaded to be a Christian; she could see, even then, the beauty and consistency of her mother's example; she knew that her mother had some rich source of happiness of which she was ignorant;

she longed to experience its richness, but there was a serious obstacle in the way. Her father was a wise man, much older than herself; why, if religion was so important a matter, was he not interested in it as well as her mother? This was the question that arose in her childish mind, and it was perfectly natural. Mr. Rosedale believed that in permitting his wife and daughter to attend church, and in allowing them to pursue their own course undisturbed, he was placing no barrier in the way of the religious education of his children. He admired his wife's consistency, and would have been pleased to see his children outwardly like her; but, alas! how potent is example for evil as well as good!

Over his son, some few years older than Alice, Mr. Rosedale's silent influence was unbounded. He early tore himself away from his mother's faithful instructions, and thought it was beneath the dignity of man to study those things into which angels desire to look.

In the commencement of her fourth summer, Alice attended a private school taught by a young lady of great intelligence and piety, whose delight it was to direct the youthful minds entrusted to her care in the path of true wisdom.

The little girl became most tenderly attached to this teacher, and so rapid was her progress in the rudiments of her education, that she soon excelled her youthful com-

panions. At the same time her disposition appeared so very amiable that soon those who were best acquainted with her saw little to regret in her character, and she frequently heard herself spoken of in the most flattering terms by indiscreet persons conversing in her presence. Yet even then the child felt something of the hidden evil of her own heart, she knew that it was not right in the sight of God. Sometimes thoughts of her unfitness for the blessedness of heaven would make her weep, and at such seasons she poured her sorrows into the listening ear of her mother, who endeavoured to direct her precious child to Him, who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me and

forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Yet these serious impressions passed away as the morning dew, and she entered with eagerness into those giddy sports which even in little children cannot be called innocent. One of these consisted in listening to immoral stories which she knew to be false, told for the amusement of her schoolmates by the oldest girl in school, a miss of fourteen. Alice had been so well instructed in these matters that she knew it to be wrong, and yet she did not tear herself away from the fascinating influence of that bad girl, whose power of deception completely blinded her teacher in regard to her real character. This

seemingly trivial circumstance was a serious hindrance to Alice; for even in after years, when she was striving to lead a godly life, these "evil communications" frequently arose in her mind to her inexpressible sorrow. At ten years of age Alice was sent to the public school at the distance of a mile from her home, where her associates were all the children of the village. Great pains were usually taken to supply well educated teachers for this school, but, as there was great diversity of opinion in regard to religious matters, it was frequently the case that unprincipled young men and women were employed.

Frequent changes were great drawbacks to the progress of the

youth in their studies, yet the really earnest and industrious pupil could find sufficient assistance in this public school to become well instructed in common English branches.

Alice was a studious little girl, and, as before, her progress was very rapid. Her tasks were thoroughly committed in less than half the time required by other members of the same class. In consequence of this, much unemployed time remained, which was a fruitful source of evil to a child of active temperament; and, unless particular pains were taken to occupy these intervals of leisure, the wise saying of Dr. Watts was sometimes verified :

“Satan finds some mischief still  
For idle hands to do.”



Some of the teachers well understood this principle, and took a very wise course in relation to their precocious little pupil. They allowed her to hear the recitations of the lower classes in one of the adjacent rooms, and thus early commenced her preparation for the duties of a faithful teacher.

Frequently, during these years, the still small voice of the Spirit was heard in the mind of Alice, in such passages as these, "I love them that love me and they that seek me early shall find me." "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Her conscience and her intellect gave a hearty approval to the duty of the immediate consecration of her youthful heart

to the service of Christ, but her inclination induced her to put it off—as if a known duty could be performed any more easily to-morrow than to-day—to procrastinate in this all-important matter, although frequently the opening grave of some young friend reminded her that youth and health were not proof against the destroyer. At the same time she took a sort of pleasure in all religious exercises, in prayers, sacred songs, and the study of the Scriptures, in the Sabbath-school, where she had a devoted teacher whose chief aim was, as it ever should be, the conversion of his class ; and when a new instructor entered the village school, it was a great disappointment to her if he

did not open the school with prayer. Many, knowing these circumstances would have pronounced her a christian ; but Alice knew that she had never experienced that radical change of heart, without which no one can see the Lord. She was exposed to temptations many and great, for on account of the distance from home she was obliged to pass the noon intermissions at the school-house, and many other children did the same. The conduct and conversation of some of these were wicked in the extreme, for they were away from the watchful care of parents and teachers, and seemed to delight to give vent to the pent up depravity of their hearts. The impurity and profanity of these

children would have silenced the upholder of the native innocence of man, and would have been a sad commentary on that text: "They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." Happy was it for Alice then that parental instruction and example had, in a measure, fortified her for these things, so that disgust was produced in her mind by these exhibitions.

There was a sweet friendship of her early years which claims notice here. Mary Allston was a child of quiet, winning manners, of nearly the same age of Alice, around whom, almost from the commencement of their acquaintance, her warmest affections twined. Gentle, unassuming, and far less excitable than

Alice, she was a very valuable companion for her, as Mrs. Rosedale readily discovered ; therefore she was frequently invited to visit at the farm, which was a very easy, but efficient way of conferring happiness upon two little girls. Together they studied, together they roamed over hill and dale, together they attended the same class in the beloved Sabbath-school ; conversing freely upon topics of mutual interest, until they attained their thirteenth year. Then a new era commenced in their lives.

A most interesting revival of religion was in progress in their native place, and Mary and Alice were made subjects of renewing grace. Alice, whose mind had ever been

subject to serious impressions, was first aroused to a sense of the guilt of her conduct in so long resisting the influences of the Spirit, and she felt that it would be perfectly just if God should cast her off for ever. She became aware that her heart was not in the state to be capable of entering with pleasure into the employments of the redeemed in heaven, and yet she feared exceedingly that state of hopeless remorse and agony of which her present feelings seemed only a slight foretaste.

Her distress incapacitated her for her ordinary occupations. At school she could only weep, and at noon she endured the taunts of her wicked schoolmates, who sneeringly

proclaimed that Alice Rosedale had turned saint, with hardly a perception of their wanton cruelty; so much was her mind engrossed with the all important subject. Mary, for her comfort, tried to repeat the cheering promises of the gospel, but they fell upon unheeding ears, for she was convinced they could not be intended for her. She returned home, and entered her mother's chamber with so heavy a step and so sad a countenance that Mrs. Rosedale was seriously alarmed. Throwing herself upon a low ottoman at her mother's feet, she exclaimed, "Oh mother, I am lost! What shall I do to be saved?" The answer of Scripture rushed to the mother's lips, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ

and thou shalt be saved." "But can he, will he receive a poor sinner like me?" "Alice," said her mother, "do you believe me when I tell you that I love you?" "How can I doubt you when you assure me with your own lips?" replied the daughter. "Then why do you doubt the very words of Him, who is infinite Truth, 'I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance,' and 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out'?"

Thus saying, Mrs. Rosedale arose and left the room, closing the door after her, and in a retired place not far distant she knelt in earnest supplication for her beloved child.

Left alone, Alice arose and paced the floor with great agitation. "O



had I regarded the things that belong to my peace," she exclaimed, "I should long ago have been at rest, but now my unbelieving heart will not submit. There is now but one thing that I can do, as my last hope. I'll go to Jesus.

"I can but perish if I go  
I am resolved to try,  
For if I stay away, I know  
I must for ever die."

Thus saying, she sank upon her knees, and the prayer that flowed from her heart, although consisting only of incoherent petitions for mercy, was heard and answered. There was an entire surrender of the will—the whole being to Christ. Then first she saw the wondrous plan of salvation in its true light,

and an almost ecstatic joy took possession of her heart.

“Her tongue broke out in unknown strains  
And sung redeeming love.”

There was joy in Mrs. Rosedale's heart that night, such as the world can neither give nor take away. At a late hour Alice left her mother's room, and retired to her own apartment. The sweetness of acceptance with God so irradiated her whole soul that everything seemed changed. It was long before she could yield to slumber, and when she awoke the sun was shining brightly into her room. She arose and threw up the casement, and there lay the landscape with which she had always been familiar, bathed in the golden light of a bright June morning. She had

thought it beautiful before, but then, in the light of her newly awakened soul, as its glories burst upon her view, she exclaimed, "O Lord our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth ! The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine. Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad ; let the sea roar and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein ; then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord. O come let us worship and bow down ; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. Praise ye him, all his angels ; praise ye him, all his hosts. Praise ye him, sun and moon ; praise

ye him, all ye stars of light. Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons and all deeps; fire and hail; snow and vapour; stormy wind fulfilling his word; mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars; beasts and all cattle; creeping things and flying fowls; kings of the earth and all people; princes and all judges of the earth; both, young men and maidens; old men and children. Let them praise the name of the Lord; for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven."

From this eventful period Alice commenced life in earnest. In her case the outward change was not so remarkable as it is frequently, because she had always conducted

herself with great propriety, but notwithstanding this, the new birth was not the less real and entire. Previously she had been studious and industrious, because she believed it would please her kind parent and friends; but from the hour of her conversion the motive was changed; she laboured for the glory of God and the advancement of his kingdom on earth. At school she never commenced an exercise without a silent prayer for the divine blessing, and she was astonished to find how much her mind was strengthened and refreshed, by the constant communion with the Author of all wisdom. Her natural kindness of manner gave her great power over the hearts of her companions;

this talent she also directed into the same channel, and added to her affection for her friends the most earnest endeavours for their spiritual good. In this work her gentle friend, Mary, joined with her whole heart. In her case the light of truth dawned faintly in her mind, and brightened very gradually, so that she could not distinguish the precise time of the change; but she could confidently say, with the blind man, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind now I see."

These two young Christians stood alone in the school, and their example was so conspicuous that they were exposed to much persecution from two youths of the baser sort, who held them up to the ridicule

of the school in the intermission at noon.

This was no small trial to extremely sensitive young ladies ; and in the course of the following winter it became almost intolerable from the fact that they had a teacher, a college student, who sympathized with these bad boys. Out of school hours he was frequently heard to blaspheme the holy name, dearest to the hearts of these youthful disciples. At the close of school, one day, as Alice and Mary were crossing the playground, they overheard one of these boys remark sneeringly to the teacher, "There go the saints, it will not do to swear before them." The teacher replied with a horrid oath, that he would "take

the hypocrisy out of the contemptible methodists." Thus encouraged by one who should have suppressed such ruffian-like conduct, the rude boy seized a snowball and hurling it with all his strength at the head of Alice, broke into a hearty laugh. The missile did not miss its aim, and striking her in the temple she fell senseless to the ground. At this instant a strong man belonging to the district, who had been a silent spectator of the whole scene from behind the fence, rushed forward, seized the fainting girl in his arms and bore her to his own house ; at the same time casting a look of withering scorn upon the man, who was receiving wages for the instruction of youth in such deadly crimes.



The boy whose hand had done the deed, which had so seriously injured the meek and patient girl, stood as if petrified with horror. He noticed not the cries of vengeance from the excited children, he stirred not from the spot. His only thought was, "I have killed her." When a messenger came to tell them that Alice had recovered from her swoon and did not seem to be seriously injured, it did not much relieve his mind. He knew that he had hated her only because her consistent example was a continual reproach to him. His thoughts were altogether insupportable to him. In the silence of his chamber he gave way to the wildest expressions of anguish. A week later, when Alice

met him, pale from the injury, but wearing a smile of almost angelic sweetness, and extending her hand to him remarked, "You did not think it would hurt me so much, Herbert," all his fortitude forsook him, and he wept like a child. It was a great struggle for that rough, badly taught boy to ask forgiveness of a girl, but he did it manfully; with the deepest sincerity and humility, and when he was assured it was freely given, and reminded to ask forgiveness of God, he exclaimed warmly; "I'll do it this very moment, O God be merciful to me a sinner."

That prayer was answered, and that rough boy, now a successful minister of the gospel, commenced a life of prayer from that very hour.

It is perhaps needless to say that the immoral teacher was immediately dismissed, and another procured whose influence was salutary upon the school. As the winter wore away, a shade came over the brightness of the earthly friendship of Alice and Mary, for the latter, never very strong, was rapidly declining in strength, and was fully aware that she was passing away. Very precious were their communings upon the better world, yet so painful was the thought of separation to Alice that, but for her trust in God, she felt she could not endure it.

“How can I live without you, dear Mary?” said she one day, as they sat with clasped hands in the

home of the latter. "Dear Alice," replied her companion, "God will take me away that he may draw you more closely to himself." And then, in a little while you will come home too ; and oh ! the glory of that world, it is so dazzlingly bright, and it will be so sweet to be with Jesus, to see him face to face, that my spirit longs and faints to be there ! You would not detain me, my much loved friend in this world of pain and sorrow ?"

"O no ! my Mary, I feel that I would be selfish in the extreme to do so ; still I am weak, and you have so helped me in my Christian course that I know not how I shall stand alone."

"Jesus will be your strength,

your all sufficient aid. Trust no longer in any arm of flesh—in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Adieu, dear Alice, I am weak and weary, but I am going home where weakness and weariness are never known. May our Saviour watch over us while we are absent from one another.” Pressing a warm kiss upon the lips of her friend, Alice left the room in silence. Her emotions were too deep for utterance. It was a long farewell, for ere the sun illumined the eastern sky, the ransomed spirit of Mary Allston ascended to her heavenly home.

“For ever with the Lord !

Amen, so let it be ;

Life from the dead is in that word,

’Tis immortality.”

This bereavement fell at first as a crushing weight upon Alice. Her extremely sensitive mind clothed all things—the fresh beauties of opening spring, the songs of warbling birds and all the sweet influences of nature, in the deepest mourning. She believed that she could never be cheerful again. Her watchful mother saw her grief, and faithfully warned her against its unlimited indulgence. She reminded her of the great reason she had for gratitude to her heavenly Father that he had dealt so gently with her young friend during her life, and that he had early removed her from the snares of earth. It was long ere Alice regained her wonted composure, but in this

affliction she richly experienced the truth of the promise, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

Soon after the death of her friend, Alice, who had previously inquired earnestly into the doctrines and creed of the church which she had attended from infancy, felt that it was her duty to profess her faith before the world. Some of the doctrines of the church were indeed mysterious to her, but as she closely compared them with Scripture, she found that they had the sanction of a "Thus saith the Lord," and that was enough. Should she doubt because some things were dark to her human vision? How then should she receive many myste-

rious but acknowledged truths of human science ?

She felt it a duty to obey the command of the Saviour, " Do this in remembrance of me," and she thought it a great privilege to be numbered with the children of God.

It was a solemn season to her when she stood up in the place of prayer and took the vows of God upon her, and it was her most earnest desire to consecrate all her powers and resources without reserve unto the Lord.



## CHAPTER II.

## YOUTHFUL DAYS.

THE next summer, at the age of fifteen, Alice left home to reside with an adopted sister of her mother living at a distance, and to go through the ordinary course of study in an excellent academy in the neighbourhood.

It was her last night at home, her trunks were packed, and Alice, with a burdened heart stole up to her mother's room to commune for a while with that dear relative from whom she must now be separated

most of the time for three years. Her mother met her with a smile; and drawing her to a seat conversed with her freely upon the many topics of interest incident to such an occasion, and then remarked :

“And now, my daughter, be a whole Christian! Shrink not at ridicule or opposition. Be not afraid nor ashamed to declare yourself on the Lord's side. These years will be exceedingly important in the formation of your character. Never let anything tempt you to forget your Bible and your stated seasons of devotion.” This advice was treasured up by the daughter, and much of her subsequent course may be attributed to her scrupulous

obedience to her mother's counsels.

The next evening found her alone in her large and airy chamber at her aunt's residence. This person, Mrs. Maxwell, (whom she had been taught to call her aunt,) was almost an entire stranger to her niece, having travelled much abroad with her husband, who was a sea captain. Alice thought her very different from her own dear mother. There was a certain stateliness of manner that repelled the timid girl. Yet her mother had often spoken of her with affection, and Alice resolved to try to love her for her mother's sake.

That first evening away from home, however, she felt lonely and

dispirited. She was a stranger in a strange place, and a heart like hers needed sympathy and friendship. She drew out from her trunk her little Bible, but the sight of various articles placed there by her mother made her weep, and she could not compose her thoughts sufficiently to be comforted by reading its precious pages. Soon a step upon the stairs startled her from her dreamy thoughts, and a loud rap at the door was immediately followed by the boisterous entrance of a girl about her own age, whose chubby form, strongly built frame, and ruddy cheeks bespoke a state of exuberant health and spirits.

“So this is my new cousin, Alice Rosedale, I suppose. Ma wanted me

to wait for an introduction, but I could not wait her slow motions. How do you like Ashwood Grove? You'll be bored to death with tasks and flummery, and old Elmer is so cross and fussy that the girls can't even speak in school without a lecture. For my part I shall be heartily glad when I get through the course, and my father takes me out on the ocean again. I would have you believe I like variety." During this singular speech Alice stood mute with astonishment, and then remarked, "And you, I suppose, are my cousin, Ella Maxwell, of whom I have heard, but have never had the pleasure of seeing before." "Yes, that's my name. Returned just six weeks ago from the South

Sea Islands where I have been with pa. I wish I was there now."

Then followed a long dissertation upon general items, much of which consisted of the sayings and doings of her mother's servants, or the seamen of her father, until Alice, weary, disgusted, and heart-sick, was obliged to say, "I have had a wearisome day, dear cousin, and it will be necessary for me soon to retire to rest." "O yes," said Ella, "I am going soon. O don't I wish I was going to sleep in your room. I'll tease mother to let me, see if I don't."

Poor Alice! how her heart ached over the apparent neglect in the education of her wild and thoughtless cousin. Long she lay awake

revolving plans for her improvement, and with the natural hopefulness of youth she looked forward to the time when Ella's coarse, wild manners should become polished and refined, and she should be a consistent Christian.

Perhaps, thought she, this is a part of the work I have to do at Ashwood Grove.

Next day Alice commenced her studies in good earnest. She found the principal, Mr. Elmer, to be a gentleman of great intelligence and refinement, and Miss Embury, first assistant, was a lady whom she felt sure she should love. Time passed away rapidly, and Alice became a favourite with teachers and pupils. In scholarship she stood very high,

yet such was her lovely disposition that no one seemed to look upon her with envy, as is frequently the case in institutions of the kind. Then the influence of her earnest, practical piety could not but be felt, although she was very quiet and unostentatious in the path of duty.

At her home she met with some severe trials, and petty vexations without number from the wild and careless Ella. Indeed she could find no impressible place in the mind or heart of the giddy girl. Sometimes her patience gave way entirely, and she was obliged to mourn over the remains of depravity in her heart, yet unsubdued by grace. Yet after she had spoken angrily to her cousin, she always



confessed to her her error and implored forgiveness.

About the middle of the first term a young lady came to Alice in the recess, and invited her to spend the next evening with her at her home, saying, that she expected a few of her young friends. Alice, thinking it would be an agreeable way of spending an evening, accepted the invitation, and thought no more of the matter until she heard some members of the school conversing together about this gathering. Then she learned that it was to be a large party, and that dancing and some giddy games, then in vogue, were to be introduced.

As her friend had gone home, she wrote the following note, and sent it

by Ella, who was delighted to attend the party.

“DEAR ANNIE,—When I accepted your kind invitation, I supposed you were expecting only a few friends, and that it would be a quiet evening, spent in conversation and music. Such an evening would have been very pleasant to me; but as a professing Christian, I feel that it would be wrong for me to indulge in the merriment and dancing of your assembly.

Hoping to meet you ere long in some less public, social manner,

I remain yours, &c.,

ALICE ROSEDALE.

Ella met with a thoughtless companion on her way to Annie's, and

became so engrossed in conversation that she was late at the party, and entering the well filled drawing-room, she handed the note to Annie. Just as the latter had glanced at its contents and was folding the note, Ella, with characteristic rudeness, snatched it from her and read it aloud amid bursts of laughter and merriment. Annie, with native politeness, turned the conversation, and the matter passed over for the time. The next day, at the close of school, Agnes Barton, second assistant, a young lady some two years her senior, came to Alice and whispered in her ear, "Do you know that you spoiled all my enjoyment last evening?" Alice coloured to the temples when told of the read-

ing of the note, for she had been assured that Miss Barton was in the habit of ridiculing religious matters, and simply saying, that she regretted exceedingly that anything she had done had produced an effect so different from her intention, she bade her good evening and walked away. In the silence of her chamber however she reflected that there was a seriousness in Miss Barton's manner that she had never observed before, and she penned a note full of affectionate entreaty, urging her to come to Jesus. That this was an important event in the life of Miss Barton will be seen hereafter. Examination was approaching, and to Alice had been given the preparation of an original

hymn for the occasion, in addition to a theme for composition in which she very naturally desired to excel. Her ordinary lessons pressed so heavily that very little time was left, and she began to fear that she should not be able to finish all that was required of her. Just at this busy period she received a note from the youngest girl in school containing these few words :

DEAR ALICE,—Can you tell me what I must do to become a christian? I am in great distress about my soul.

LUCY BROWN.

Books and papers were immediately laid aside, and a long letter was written to the young inquirer ex-

plaining to her the way of salvation.

Then Alice resumed her occupations, and in two hours after midnight her duties were performed to the satisfaction of her teachers. She was then more strongly impressed, than ever before, with the truth that religion does not hinder but helps severe study.

In a few days Lucy Brown was rejoicing in the hope of acceptance with God, and at the commencement of vacation three or four of the young ladies gave evidence that they had passed from death unto life. Alice, whom they had all consulted in their serious inquiries after the truth, regretted to leave them to return home, but warning

them to place their dependence solely upon the Saviour, she returned to ask counsel and direction of her mother, and her pastor. At Ashwood Grove there was no settled evangelical pastor, or Alice would have immediately consulted him in the matter.

Mr. Hammond, her pastor, assured her that he would come over and preach in the seminary hall, could she obtain the consent of the principal. Vacation over, Alice returned to school and found the interest still increasing among the young ladies. Miss Embury was a professing Christian, and when Alice first mentioned the state of affairs to her, she had a desire to help forward the work, but feared

that Mr. Elmer would object to any especial religious exercises at the seminary. In this she was not deceived; Mr. Elmer feared to offend several influential men in the board of trustees by appearing to favour evangelical religion. Still the matter lay very near her heart, and she was revolving plans for the instruction of these youthful inquirers. One evening, she requested Alice to remain for a few minutes after school, and with real concern depicted on her countenance, asked if she could not have a meeting for prayer and conference in her own room. Miss Embury was prevented from doing so herself by the well known prejudices of the family with which she lived. Alice replied,



that she would consult her aunt, and when she did so, to her surprise that individual gave a ready assent.

The first meeting was appointed for the ensuing Saturday afternoon, and Miss Embury assured Alice that she would be present.

The afternoon came, and five new born souls assembled in that upper chamber. Miss Embury did not come, detained by sudden illness, as was afterwards learned. There stood the youthful Alice, the only professed Christian of the group. How did she tremble, for she knew that the responsibility of conducting their devotions devolved upon her !

However her companions came in the zeal of their first love, and it

was a joyful season to all present. That little meeting was the commencement of a powerful revival of religion which was not confined to the school.

Mr. Hammond came over and preached in the town hall; other clergymen did the same. People began to relish evangelical preaching; and in two years from that time the converts of that revival purchased the Universalist church and established a small church and Sabbath-school of their own. But to return to the school.

Mr. Elmer soon consented that the prayer meeting should be held in one of the recitation rooms, and the number that attended was soon increased from five to twenty-five.

But where was Agnes Barton all that time? Not in the prayer-meeting, not among the inquirers. Alice was sure that she was not uninterested, for she had thankfully received her letter and expressed a wish to be a Christian.

Yet she was so extremely cautious in the matter, that Alice began to think that the fear of the world must be the hindrance. She kept up a constant correspondence with her, and judged from her letters that she was under deep conviction. Alice begged to be allowed to present her case to Miss Embury in whom Agnes had great confidence; but she would not allow her to do so. Yet in each interval of leisure she would come to Alice for instruction in the

path of duty. At this critical period, Miss Embury was detained from school some days by illness, and upon Miss Barton and Alice devolved the whole care of that department of the school. Thus Miss Barton seemed obliged to control her anxiety during the busy day, although she endeavoured to recall her convictions at night. Alice saw and felt the danger of such a proceeding, but knew not how to remedy the evil. Wednesday morning came, the time for general exercises, and a lecture in Chemistry from Mr. Elmer, so that the female teachers were free from responsibility. Alice took her seat as usual among the pupils, and Miss Barton passing that way slipped a note

into her hands. It seemed the very expression of despair. "What have I been doing," said she, "thus to neglect my eternal interest? How can I expect to recall serious impressions at night if I grieve away the Spirit during the day. O Alice, what shall I do?"

Alice for once in all the term acted in opposition to the rules of school, which allowed no writing during lectures; she seized a pencil and wrote, "Agnes, school will immediately close. This afternoon is a half holiday. Go to your chamber and leave it not, until you have found the compassionate Saviour who is waiting to receive you."

At the close of school Mr. Elmer spoke to Miss Barton as she was

passing to the hall, and presented her with a ticket for a panoramic exhibition, which was to take place that afternoon. It was one which she had long wished to see, and this was the last opportunity, as it was to be removed to a distant city the next day. Her first impulse was to accept the ticket, so kindly offered, with many thanks for the honour conferred upon her ; but a sudden thought checked her ; “ I have important business which requires my undivided attention this afternoon,” replied she, “ therefore I must decline your unmerited kindness.” It seemed a slight matter, the simple refusal to attend that exhibition, yet on it hinged the destiny of an immortal soul.

Again, as if to tempt her to swerve from the path of duty, she was importuned to spend the afternoon and evening, at the home of a very dear friend, with Miss Rosedale and a few others. This last invitation had more weight than the first, because she much wished for conversation with Alice, upon the all-important subject occupying her thoughts.

Yet she reflected that she should not probably have an opportunity for private conversation, and she returned to her home with the full determination to do as Alice had recommended. Requesting her mother not to allow her to be interrupted, she retired to her chamber.

She tried to pray, but dark and

gloomy doubts arose ; she could find no words, no thoughts, in which she dared to address a holy God.

Then the words of a hymn, which she had learned in infancy, came into her mind, and they seemed to be an exact expression of her emotions.

“ With tears of anguish I lament,  
Here at thy feet, my God,  
My passion, pride, and discontent,  
And vile ingratitude.

Sure there was ne’er a heart so base,  
So false as mine has been ;  
So faithless to its promises,  
So prone to every sin.

How long, dear Saviour, shall I feel  
These struggles in my breast ?  
When wilt thou bow my stubborn will  
And give my conscience rest ?

Break, sovereign grace—oh break the charm,  
And set the captive free ;



Reveal, great God, thy mighty arm —  
And haste to rescue me.”

In the evening, as Alice sat in her friend's parlour joining in the conversation around her, rather absently, for her thoughts were with Agnes, she was surprised at the announcement of Miss Barton. How very anxiously she scanned her friend's features, as if there to read the history of that afternoon's retirement! But there was nothing there to reveal what was passing within, so perfect was the control which Agnes had gained over the expression of her countenance. She spoke in her usual tone, and upon topics of general interest. Soon a walk was proposed. It was a lovely moonlight evening in mid-

summer, and as the young ladies passed down a street shaded by beautiful trees, and at its foot stretched away the boundless ocean, dotted here and there by white sails, the scene was so irresistibly grand that Miss Barton, who had taken the arm of Alice, exclaimed, in the beautiful language of the poet,

“These are thy glorious works, Parent of good !  
Almighty !”

turning to her friend, she exclaimed, “ I am so happy to-night, dearest Alice, that I can find no words for the expression of my joy. I believe that God is my reconciled Father, that I have been washed from my sins in the blood of the Lamb. My friend, how shall I evince my gratitude to you for your tender

interest in the welfare of my immortal soul? When Ella Maxwell read your note before the merry group assembled in Annie Warner's parlour, I felt self-condemned that I had consented to waste my precious time in such frivolous amusements, and I admired the consistency of your conduct, not only in declining to be present, but in giving the true reason for your absence. Then an overwhelming sense of the worth of the soul came into my mind, and I thought of the fearful manner in which I had neglected my spiritual interests, and the impression would not depart.

“I tried to speak to you on the next day, and you did not seem to understand me, but that kind

letter, oh ! Alice, it was the first direct appeal that had ever been made to my conscience by any Christian friend, and from the hour that I received it I had no rest until I found peace and pardon at the foot of the cross." Alice was much affected at this disclosure, and smiling through her tears whispered, " Praise the Lord."

Long these friends conferred together upon the subject so dear to their hearts ; and the friendship which had commenced before, was that night so strongly cemented by the bonds of Christian love, that it remained to bless their whole subsequent lives.

" Nor shall the glowing flame expire  
When dimly burns frail nature's fire.

Then shall they meet in realms above,  
A heaven of joy—a heaven of love.”

Time passed rapidly and pleasantly to Alice, for constant occupation allowed no space for weariness ; and she found that the religious exercises in which she had engaged had not hindered her in the acquisition of worldly science, but that they had rather invigorated her mental powers. And then the happiness of such a course, compared with the youthful experience of many persons ! Alice had a joyful heart, and she invariably wore a cheerful countenance.

Oftentimes the remark was made by her companions, “ There must be something in religion, it makes Alice Rosedale so happy.

The third year of school was drawing to a close, yet Ella Maxwell remained the same wild, unmanageable girl. Her lessons were never correctly learned, she was almost constantly in disgrace with the teachers, and she did everything in her power to annoy them, and all her school-mates who endeavoured to do right. She had much influence over a certain class of the girls who were fond of hoydenish sports, and indiscriminate ridicule of everything that came in their way.

At home her mother had strictly forbidden her to enter Alice's room without leave, so that she did not much interfere with her cousin's studies, but at school and on

the way thither she contrived in various ways to annoy her. Yet Alice saw that her cousin had never enjoyed the inestimable privilege of a mother's careful training; for Mrs. Maxwell seemed to care very little for her daughter, provided her conduct gave her no personal inconvenience. Alice wished to direct her wandering feet into the path of peace.

For this she prayed and laboured, but all seemed to be in vain, and Alice believed her failure to win Ella's confidence was in consequence of the inconsistency of her own conduct in several outbursts of anger, provoked, it is true, by Ella's wanton disregard of her cousin's

feelings, yet none the less sinful for the provocation.

About this time Alice wrote a letter to her mother from which we make the following extract :

“I am eighteen years of age to-day. In looking back upon the past three years they seem like a dream with their variety of duties and changing scenes. Yet, dear mother, I wish solemnly to ask myself the question, ‘What have I done for God during these years?’

“The retrospect, although it affords some pleasure, is far from what I could wish it to be.

“Some delightful seasons have been given to me—seasons in which I have felt more than ever before the worth of the religion of the



gospel. I have had the unspeakable pleasure of directing some inquiring souls to the Lamb of God ; but have I myself kept near to him ? My conscience answers not as I ought. I have to acknowledge with shame many delinquencies in thought, word, and deed. To-day my heart is filled with self-abasement and gratitude that God has permitted me, a poor unworthy worm of the dust, to labour for the advancement of his kingdom."

Alice went through the course of studies and returned to her home, not imagining that her education was finished but just commenced.

## CHAPTER III.

## AFFLICTIONS AND DUTIES.

ON arriving at her own loved home Alice was no less surprised than delighted to find that her father had established family worship, and seemed to be in every respect another man. Her mother had not informed her of this great change, at the express desire of her father, who greatly feared that he was deceiving himself, and wished to raise no hopes which he might disappoint.

She also learned for the first time that Alfred, her brother, was a

painful source of anxiety to his parents. She knew that he was wild and reckless, but her parents had forborne to distress her with the intelligence that he had joined himself to an idle gang of dissolute young men, who seemed intent not only on working out their own destruction, but on annoying the whole town by their noisy mirth and drunken revelry.

Their usual rendezvous was the bar-room of a public house in the village, and more than one carousal had threatened injury to the life of some of the gang.

Heavily sank this knowledge into the heart of Alice. Then indeed the deep waters went over her soul. Had she been the only sufferer, it

might have been overwhelming ; but her mother, her precious mother, was evidently sinking under her sorrow, and her father was continually upbraiding himself as the cause of his son's dereliction from the path of duty. In her weakness she carried her burden to her covenant Saviour, and felt his sustaining arms underneath her.

Then was she endued with fresh strength and courage, and earnestly she endeavoured to be both son and daughter to her distressed parents.

She soon relieved her mother almost wholly of household cares, for she was apt to learn, and brought to the work a determined will

This task was light compared with others which were soon laid

•

upon her ; for as her mother's health rapidly declined, her nervous system was so much affected that she was often in great darkness. At such seasons it was only Alice who could soothe and comfort the poor sufferer. Her mind dwelt with morbid sensibility upon the misconduct of her son, and she feared she had deceived herself in regard to her own religious experience. Alice devoted a part of each day to reading to her soothing passages from the Bible or the lives of some earnest, suffering Christians and thus diverted her thoughts from her own troubles. Then she daily took her out to walk amid the beautiful scenery which surrounded them, and ministered to her diseased

mind as none but an affectionate daughter could.

Often and often her dissipated brother came to her home in a state of brutal intoxication, bringing with him some of his boon companions. These Mr. Rosedale quickly expelled from his house; and then with the heart agony which only fond parents can feel under such circumstances he and Alice assisted the unhappy youth to his bed, and bestowed upon him every kind attention. Whenever it was possible all this disgrace was kept from the unhappy mother, but every item of Alfred's behaviour, with great exaggerations was faithfully reported to her by Mrs. Brunt, a neighbour, who called frequently

for the ostensible purpose of sympathizing with the family in their affliction, but really for the sake of carrying from them anything which would interest the gossiping circle of which she seemed to be the centre. Occasionally in the weakness of bodily and mental anguish, Mrs. Rosedale would speak of herself to Mrs. Brunt as she did to her daughter, as a lost sinner without hope, not being able to see that she was placing confidence in a very improper person.

One afternoon in the winter following, the ladies' benevolent society met at the home of Mrs. Tattelle in the village, and while the fingers of the ladies were busy with their needles, their tongues were freely

discussing the characters of their absent neighbours.

“Don’t you think?” cried Mrs. Brunt, rushing breathlessly into the midst of the group; “Alfred Rosedale has forged a note on his father that will sink the old man as sure as anything. I knew that fellow would come to some bad end.” Here she stopped to breathe, and exclamations of, “You don’t say so!” “Well, I never!” “Won’t the upstarts feel mean now?” and similar expressive phrases revealed the relish with which the intelligence was received.

“I pity Mrs. Rosedale and Alice,” ventured to suggest little Susan Green, who sat in a corner by herself.”

“That’s more than I can say,” re-



sumed Mrs. Brunt. "Mrs. Rosedale has set herself up for an example to common folks long enough; but she's come down low enough now, however, for I heard her say only the other day that she didn't believe there was such a sinner alive as she was. I don't doubt but she has committed some dreadful crime, or she wouldn't take on so, and all these trials wouldn't have come upon her."

"Now, Mrs. Brunt," said Mrs. Goodhue, "don't you remember poor old uncle Saunders? He was one of the very best men that ever lived, and yet one friend after another was taken from him; then he lost his property, and finally he was obliged to go to the poorhouse,

where he suffered four long years with rheumatism and then died. Yet no one ever heard him murmur or complain, and nobody believes that he was more wicked than Squire Grimes, who cheated his servants out of their honest dues, yet lived and died rolling in wealth." "Judge not that ye be not judged," said our Saviour," fell from Mrs. Hammond's lip as she came in from an adjoining room, where she had heard the whole conversation. Oh for a heart to feel for others' sorrows as we do for our own! Then would many a heartache be spared and this world would soon become the abode of charity and peace.

While this conversation was passing, the house of the Rosedales

presented a very different scene. The brother's last misdeed, if true, had not yet reached the family. Alice and her father were in the chamber of the invalid. For many days her strength had been wasting away, and now as she lay just on the verge of the grave, the dark cloud was lifted from her mind, the portals of "the better world" were full in view. Its breezes almost fanned her cheek, its rapturous music filled her dying ear. As the natural sun, bursting from behind the storm clouds of a tempestuous day, tints more gorgeously the sunset sky than the broad noon of his meridian splendour; so the graces of this suffering christian beamed forth more gloriously as

the lamp of life burned low, than in all her previous career. Gone were all her doubts and fears, ended for ever all her cares and sorrows, no more weeping, no more sighing, no more anguish ; she was passing over the river, but the waters were shallow, they touched not the hem of her garment. The lover of her youth and companion of her riper years, her husband, stood beside her, his heart full of anguish ; her beloved daughter was kneeling at her bedside in the bitterness of woe, but their grief moved her not : they thought she perceived it not. Suddenly turning upon them those orbs, from which earthly objects were fast receding, she exclaimed, O my loved ones, could you view

the past, the present, and the future as I now behold them, you would not murmur, you would not mourn, you would rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. God knows just how much of care and sorrow we need, how much we can bear. In tender love he afflicts his children. I know it, I feel it. My son! my son! I have prayed for thee, and God, for his own name's sake, has heard my prayer. Alice, your brother must be saved! God's promises are yea and amen."

Quite exhausted by the effort of speaking, she motioned Alice to bring her little Bible.

Obedying, she opened the book at 1 Cor. xv. Commanding her emotions by a powerful effort, she read

until she came to the closing verses ; then the dying saint who had listened with deep attention caught the strain and repeated slowly, " So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin ; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Her pastor entering at the moment, she exclaimed, " Praise the Lord for me ! I'm going home. Quickly ! or I cannot join you here !" Mr. Hammond commended

the departing Spirit to its Saviour and its God in a short prayer, and when he arose, the last moments had come. "Sing!" she feebly articulated as she lay in the arms of her weeping husband. Alice was entirely unable to commence, but Mr. Hammond, in a clear sweet voice, sang:

"O if my Lord would come and meet,  
 My soul would stretch her wings in haste,  
 Fly fearless through death's iron gate,  
 Nor feel the terrors as she passed.

"Jesus can make a dying bed  
 Feel soft as downy pillows are;  
 While on his breast I lean my head,  
 And breathe my life out sweetly there."

He commenced softly and alone, but Alice, catching the inspiration of the scene, joined in with a voice at first tremulous with emotion, but gathering strength and sweetness

throughout the exercise, at its close she burst into a rapturous song of praise, whose hallelujah died upon the air just as the spirit fled. Silently they stood as at the very gateway of heaven; they could not weep, they felt more like continuing their songs of praise.

Awe-struck like those who have had a partial glimpse, through the pearly gates, of the world of light, they withdrew from the chamber, as from a sacred place.

The void that is made in a household, when the faithful wife and mother is taken away, has been too often described to need a comment here; yet in this particular case were circumstances of peculiar trial.

When Alice returned from her



mother's grave to her desolate home, she felt, for a time, that earth could grant her no boon so rich as a place by her side. Dark, and cold, and bitter seemed the waters of the ocean of life over which her frail barque was drifting, almost without one ray of sunshine looming up the shadowy future. She knew that this was not true submission to the will of God, therefore her heart was sad within her, and she wrote bitter things against herself. Her brother's dissolute habits, and passion for games of chance, had involved his father in so many difficulties that the dear old farm of her father's ancestors, his own and his children's birth-place, so precious to him as connected with the memory of

his sainted wife, and containing her grave, must soon be given up. One year was allowed them for its redemption; but they had no hope of retaining it, as her father was already bowing beneath the weight of years, and utterly unable to enter any new sphere of business. At times, in her anxiety to retain a home for her father's old age, Alice thought of her uncle Maxwell, as she had supposed him to be very wealthy; but all hopes of assistance in that direction were frustrated by a letter from Ella, informing her in semi-barbarous English of the loss of the vessel which he commanded. Mrs. Maxwell was on board, and only two of the crew were saved after being exposed to the violence of the elements for two

days and one night. Thus poor Ella found herself a friendless orphan, without any means of support. She entreated Alice to allow her to come to her home, and both Mr. Rosedale and Alice at once resolved to take her in, until she could be taught some method of self-support. In this decision Alice was aware she had assumed no light responsibility, for she thoroughly understood her cousin; yet so anxiously did she find herself desiring the improvement of Ella, that it was the first gleam of sunshine that crossed her path,—we mean the effort to do good.

Ella came, and, as her cousin hoped, her wild spirit had been somewhat tamed by misfortune. She

appeared to endeavour earnestly, at times, to perform her duties faithfully, yet Alice soon found that it was an utter impossibility to fit her for the occupation of a common school teacher, as she hoped to do. She had been so negligent in early youth, that she could not learn when she earnestly desired to do so. For a time Alice almost yielded to discouragement; weeks, months passed away, and no progress was made. O that anxious, dreary year, with its much dreaded close full in view! Her mother's dying words had aroused hope in Alice in relation to her brother; yet as the months wore on, and the little season of thoughtfulness immediately following his mother's death appeared to be for-

gotten, and he pressed headlong into his former vices, poor Alice's heart gave way.

With the multitude of her cares and afflictions she would surely have been overwhelmed, had not God, who will never allow his children to be tempted above that which they are able to bear, given her one unexpected source of consolation in her father. The mother's words in regard to her son had also inspired him with hope, and it was a hope that no discouragement had been able to shake. It seemed to reanimate his whole being. No more bitter complaints of his own neglect of duty were heard. He had carried his burden in sincerity and in faith to his heavenly Father, and left it

there. He did not attempt to bear his grief alone. A sweet and child-like submission to his Father's will pervaded his entire being. He felt the truth of that sentiment :

“ Sweet to lie passive in thy hands  
And know no will but thine.”

Cheerfulness seemed to diffuse itself all around him. His manner changed toward Alfred. He entirely ceased to upbraid the wretched youth, and treated him with the utmost kindness and forbearance.

His Bible was his constant companion, and he came forth from the place of his stated devotions with the air of one who has enjoyed intimate communion with God. Religion was the delightful topic of conversation between father and

daughter ; yet when Alfred and Ella were with them they frequently conversed freely upon matters of general interest, that they might not become irksome to them. Yet Mr. Rosedale could never allow any subject to divert his attention from the one great object of life for any length of time, and he had the happy faculty of deducing important lessons from passing events. The Sabbath was a delightful day at the farm. Anxiety and worldly care were laid aside, and to those of the family who could enter into the spirit of the day it was a real refreshment of soul and body.

Mr. Hammond was a plain and practical preacher of the gospel. He felt it his duty to declare unto his

people the whole truth whether they would hear or forbear. Mr. Rose-dale and Alice listened to his sermons with great delight. Then the exercises of the Sabbath-school were very pleasant to the latter. She had a class of little girls to instruct, and in endeavouring to teach them she found much that was extremely profitable to her own soul.

To this class, three Sabbaths after Mrs. Rosedale's death, Mrs. Brunt brought her two daughters, remarking to Alice as she did so, that she only hoped they would be as good as her mother, for if there was ever a Christian on earth she was one, and she "always knew that she would come out bright at last." In consequence of the faithfulness of



their teacher to those poor, neglected children, it is to be hoped that they will rise above the fearful home influence surrounding them, and become useful members of society.

After the public exercises of the day were over, and Mr. Rosedale and Alice had spent a short season in the retirement of their rooms, it was their habit to repair to their family sitting room, where Ella, and sometimes Alfred, awaited them, and there discuss the plain scripture truths to which they had listened. Then Mr. Rosedale read passages from the Bible, or some devotional book, and remarked upon them in a manner that very rarely failed to interest all who heard him. This exercise was never made wearisome

by its undue length, and was immediately followed by tea and family prayers, after which came an exercise in which even Alfred delighted to engage. This was singing the sweet hymns learned at their sainted mother's knee, her particular favourites.

The Sabbath twilight, spent thus, was to Alice by far the brightest season of her life of care. Then she felt hopeful for her deluded brother, and for Ella. She sometimes thought she detected in her brother melting reminiscences of his far-off childhood ; yet often when her hopes had been thus raised, and she ventured to draw him into conversation, he would repel her by saying, " Now go, little sis, and bring me the

newspaper, I want to read it; the secular part, I mean."

And the succeeding week would find him plunging deeply and still more deeply into vice and degradation.

This year of anxiety and trial was fast drawing to a close, and every hope of retaining the homestead had fled. Winter was approaching and everything in nature wore a desolate aspect.

It was a dark November evening. The storm which had been threatening all day had set in with unwonted fury. The winds shrieked and moaned through the long leafless branches of the lofty elms in the yard, while ever and anon volumes

of blinding rain beat against the windows.

It was an evening that required a cheerful fireside circle, and some hope for the future to render it endurable. Mr. Rosedale had retired early, complaining of slight illness, and after Alice had seen him sink into a profound slumber, she returned to the sitting room where Ella sat, seemingly lost in gloomy thought.

It was very seldom that Alice allowed herself to sink into despondency, but that evening the thought of all she had lost in the sympathy and affection of her beloved mother so overpowered her, and there was present in her mind such a vivid sense of some undefined evil in con-

nection with her brother, that all her fortitude gave way, and she sank into a reverie so deep and full of darkness that she was really alarmed. Her hiding place so frequently resorted to, in former times, seemed beyond her reach. Then the words of her dying Lord occurred to her mind, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and she was comforted. Had he endured the hidings of his Father's face to atone for her sins, and should she murmur because darkness, for a time, overshadowed her path? No sooner did she take this view of the subject, than light and hope and confidence entered her mind, and she murmured aloud, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him!"

At this moment a noise at the gate attracted her attention, and soon she had need of all her heaven-sent courage and strength; for, opening the door, the first object she saw was her brother's apparently lifeless form extended upon a litter borne by four of his drunken boon companions, even then, in a state of partial intoxication. He had received a terrible wound in the arm from which the blood was still issuing, which proved that life was not extinct. Appalled beyond measure by the ghastly spectacle, Alice stood trembling for a moment, but her presence of mind did not desert her, neither did the sense of dependence upon her Father in heaven depart. She saw immediately that

prompt action alone would save her brother's life, and she, of all the group, was the only one in a state to act. Entreating the wretched young men to go for the surgeon, after they had laid Alfred upon a sofa, she calmly and collectedly seized the first bandage that came in her way, and bound it tightly and firmly around the arm above the wound, thus stopping, in a measure, the violence of the bleeding. Then she applied restoratives to his nostrils and consciousness returned. But the surgeon—oh if he were here now her brother might live! and how precious above all price, now appeared that life to her, from which, if severed, the immortal spirit must be lost for ever!

Rushing to the door she heard shouts from the drunken revelers, which revealed to her the fact that they had not gone in quest of the surgeon. What was to be done? Her aged father was ill, but he must be aroused, made acquainted with the new sorrow, and sent for assistance. "Shall I go," asked Ella, "to awaken him?"

"No! please stay with Alfred, I must go myself."

"But I am afraid to be left alone with him," exclaimed the irresolute girl, who had done nothing but wring her hands and weep.

"Then come with me, but my poor father must hear these heavy tidings from his daughter's lips." Aroused from his heavy slumber,



Mr. Rosedale was indeed a support to the weary girl. Warmly protected from the storm by the careful hand of Alice, he went forth into the darkness, and at the nearest neighbour's found assistance and returned.

When the surgeon had taken up the severed artery, and Alfred was carried to his room of suffering, Alice took her place as nurse, at his bedside, and for six long months, her days were spent in the same place. Regular watchers were procured for the nights, for the attending physician strictly forbade her to attempt to attend him then, if she wished to preserve her own health. A severe fever followed the wound, and Alfred's constitution,

already enfeebled by excessive drinking, reeled, and threatened to give way. Delirium ensued, and for weeks he raved incessantly of demons and scenes too horrible for description. Sometimes his ravings assumed a different form, and then he was a child again, and his mother seemed to lay her soft white hand upon his head and bless him ; and then she gazed upon him with such a pitying eye that he exclaimed, " O mother, I will forsake the evil of my way, and be all that you wish."

CHAPTER IV.

A NEW SPHERE OF ACTION.

ALFRED'S illness somewhat retarded the prosecution of a plan which Alice had formed for their future support. During the last trying year at the farm, Alice had not folded her hands in idle despondency. She believed that the dark cloud had "its silver lining," and that He who hears the young ravens when they cry would not suffer them to want. Therefore, she early wrote for advice to her former teacher, Mr. Elmer, stating her particular trials and the ne-

cessity of her labouring for the support of her aged parent. That kind man had immediately written a comforting letter to her, in which he offered her the situation of Miss Embury, which was soon to be vacant. It was sufficiently remunerative and presented strong attractions to Alice. At first she inclined to accept it unconditionally; but as her brother began slowly to amend, and there was a prospect of his recovery, it was her strong desire to remove him from former associates and influences as far as possible. In this endeavour Mr. Elmer kindly assisted her. So deep was his interest in his former pupil, that he took a long journey in her behalf, into a section of the country in which he

had many wealthy friends, and succeeded in procuring for her a class in French and drawing, which would only occupy four mornings in the week, and a few pupils in music for two of the afternoons. This kind and considerate arrangement left Alice much time unoccupied, yet was so profitable that both Mr. Rosedale and his daughter felt that it would enable them to live in comfort, and grateful hearts poured forth the incense of praise at their family altar, when it was decided that they were to go to Allington. Meanwhile Alfred required unceasing attention. As his health returned, his appetite for strong drink revived, and although he had not been allowed anything of the kind

for more than seven months, it was necessary to destroy even the little store that had been kept for medicinal purposes in the house, so completely was the miserable youth the slave of appetite.

At such times, Alice made him a refreshing cup of coffee, and sometimes administered a medicine left by the physician, to allay the irritability of nerves which had long been excited by a powerful stimulant. Then she would talk soothingly and encouragingly to him until he was overcome by drowsiness and fell asleep. When he awoke, she would remind him that each victory strengthened him in the right way.

During the illness of her brother, Alice had observed a great change

in Ella. Encouraged by Mr. Rose-dale, she had performed all household duties, neglected by her cousin's confinement to the sick room, at first awkwardly to be sure, but receiving only a look or word of approval for the effort, she endeavoured more earnestly to correct her careless habits, until she proved herself to be a real assistant to Alice. She at times seemed to be lost in deep thought, and her friends began to hope that the truths of the gospel were weighing upon her mind. This gave new fervor to their prayers, both for her and Alfred. Before her brother was able to leave the house, all arrangements were made for leaving the place. Mr. Elmer had engaged a cottage for them at

Allington, and the small portion of their goods, which would suffice to furnish it, had been sent on before them.

The last evening at the dear old place had come. Never had the setting sun more beautifully illumined the face of nature than on that bright May evening. "Oh, it is too lovely," sighed Alice, in view of her departure, "could I live here always I might not desire a better country." Then she stole out alone to her mother's grave. Around it the flowers which her own hand had planted and watered were growing luxuriantly; above it a weeping willow waved back and forth in the breezy air, amid whose graceful branches the little birds chanted



their evening songs. The far off heaven seemed so still and bright, and clear, that Alice gazed and gazed until she almost felt herself transported thither; she could imagine the raptures of that blessed land; she thought not of the toils and privations of earth, but her tears of sorrow at leaving the grave of her mother were changed to a rapturous song of praise. Earth seemed insignificant indeed, when compared with the glories to be revealed to those who love God.

To Mr. Rosedale, the farewell was quite another matter. All his life had he spent in the shade of those trees. She whom he had loved as he never could love another, slept there until the morning of the re-

surrection. There he would fain repose after his waning life had ceased. He was too old to be very deeply interested in new scenes. No wonder then that his lip quivered and tears flowed over his furrowed cheek as he turned from that little grassy mound. No wonder that his aged limbs faltered as he passed up the avenue leading to the house, on which the last rays of the sun lingered as if, like himself, unwilling to leave the place. Yet after an hour spent in the solitude of his room, he came forth and led the evening devotions with a meekness and patience in his manner quite touching to behold.

Seeing this, Alfred, the cause of this bitter trial, seemed suddenly

to awake to a sense of the enormity of his evil doings and to the sacrifices his best friends had been obliged to make for him.

“What a miserable wretch I have been!” murmured he, as he passed from the room. Alice, who heard the remark, observed to her father, “It may be that the very trial, although severe, is to be the means of bringing Alfred to the Saviour.”

Allington was two days’ journey, by railway, from their native place. They arrived near the evening of the second day, and took lodgings at a public house. Alfred was almost entirely exhausted by the journey. Alice saw him comfortably cared for, and leaving her father to watch over him she summoned

Ella and repaired to the cottage which had been engaged for them. What was her surprise when she found the furniture all arranged, new carpets on the floors, and everything in exquisite order, even to the cheerful fire in the grate, which the coldness of the evening made very acceptable! It was a pleasant reception for her, planned by Mr. Elmer, and executed in part, by the grateful Ella, who had arrived one day previously to the rest of the party. The carpets were presents from her prospective pupils. In a short time Alfred was removed to his new home, but no thrill of pleasure entered his heart as he beheld the cheerful place. Memory was busy with the past, and

Alfred Rosedale was reaping some of the bitter fruits of his youthful folly.

Not so Mr. Rosedale. He lifted up his hands in grateful thanksgiving when he entered the convenient room designed for him, and found himself surrounded by the familiar articles of home, arranged with neatness and taste. His large armchair stood near a table on which lay his well thumbed Bible and hymn-book.

A little box containing a beautiful pair of gold-bound spectacles attracted his attention, and opening a daintily written note he read :

“ DEAR SIR,—Welcome to your home in Allington ! Please accept the enclosed as a slight token of

respect from the pupils of your daughter."

The next morning was bright and beautiful. After prayers, Mr. Rose-dale went out to look about his new home. Then to his inexpressible delight he found a large garden attached to the house, and Alice was there to remind him that it was to be his especial care. He entered into its cultivation with great earnestness, and soon made it so beautiful that it attracted great attention. Then it furnished him with the means of making many a little child happy, by the present of a bouquet of flowers, and many a choic collection of the beauties of his garden found its way into the sick

room of some poor, suffering invalid.

Alice understood the matter when she wrote to Mr. Elmer that the house must have a garden ; for she knew that her father had been an active man, and would not be contented without some out-door employment ; and her plan worked to a charm, for the garden occupied all the time that Mr. Rosedale wished to spare from his reading. In the domestic arrangements Ella took the lead, relieving her cousin, in a short time, of almost all care in that department. Alfred was the only member of the household, who seemed unhappy. Removed in a great measure, from temptation, the appetite for strong drink was becom-

ing less and less, yet the gloom of his spirit increased daily. He was under deep conviction of sin for a long, long time before he would acknowledge it to any one, as if it were a matter to be ashamed of. Mr. Harrowby, their present pastor, was so much a stranger to their inner lives, that even Mr. Rosedale and Alice felt bitterly the loss of Mr. Hammond's faithful instructions. A year passed swiftly away, and Alice was very happy in her new situation. How could she be otherwise when by her industry she was enabled to procure all the comforts of life for those so dear to her; when her new friends were extremely kind to her, and fully appreciated her services, and above



all, when Alfred had been sober for more than eighteen months. Mr. Rosedale was cheerful and contented; he was more, he was grateful to God that the lines had fallen to him in so pleasant places. Of Ella they had the cheering hope that she had passed from death unto life. "Alice," said she, "I could not understand the principle which induced you to be so patient with me, and do so much for me when I had been so very unkind to you. It was a perfect mystery to me, but it spoke well for the religion which you professed, and from the time that you opened your doors to the friendless orphan, I resolved if that religion could be found by diligent search it should be mine."

It was beautiful to see the air of refined cheerfulness which religion diffused over the hitherto rude girl. All undue levity was suppressed, and her naturally exuberant spirits were a source of real pleasure to herself and friends, as they made her a very agreeable companion.

It was about this time that the attention of Alice was directed to a small settlement at no great distance from Allington, where the little children were allowed to grow up in utter ignorance, not only of their relations to God but of all worldly knowledge. Their time was spent in the woods in pursuit of herbs, berries, or anything which could be exchanged for money at the neighbouring town, and they were taught

to commit petty thefts whenever they could do so without fear of discovery. As soon as Alice arrived at Allington, she connected herself with Mr. Harrowby's Sabbath-school as a pupil, but was soon made the teacher of a class of nine little girls between the ages of ten and twelve years. Mr. Davis, the superintendent of the school, was a man keenly alive to the interests of his Master's kingdom, and he made himself acquainted not only with the members of his own school, but with the religious wants of the surrounding country. Many times he had endeavoured to establish a Sabbath-school at the place just mentioned, and as many times had he entirely failed to do so. The children were

allowed to attend a few Sabbaths for the sake of the new suit of clothes promised to them, and when they had obtained it they were sent into the woods again. "We must give up that plan to benefit them," said he, "but I have another which will perhaps prepare the way for a school at some future day. That is to divide the place into three sections, and give each section to one of our female teachers, to visit the people at their homes and converse with them upon the interests of their never-dying souls. The women and the children will not run away from them, and almost our only hope is in the children." This suggestion seemed so feasible that Mrs. Merton, Miss Day, and Alice Rose-

dale were appointed as Sabbath-school missionaries for the designated sections, and were required to keep a correct account of their visits and report at the monthly meeting of teachers.

These ladies set themselves to the work in earnest, and we may hear something of their success hereafter.

Mr. Davis was so affable in his manner toward all the members of his beloved school, and so really desirous to promote their interests, temporal as well as spiritual, that Alice, who had few advisers in the place, ventured to consult him in relation to Alfred. It had long been her wish to find some suitable employment for him, but she wisely chose to keep him at home

until she could find a place where he would not be exposed to his peculiar temptation.

Alfred had been early apprenticed to a cabinet-maker, and had gained some knowledge of that kind of work before his employer dismissed him on account of his misconduct. When she requested an interview with Mr. Davis in his behalf, that gentleman invited her to his beautiful mansion at a time specified. Alice was received so kindly by Mrs. Davis, that she felt quite at ease, notwithstanding the unpleasant nature of her errand. She was aware that Mr. Davis was engaged in the furniture business, but she knew nothing of the particulars of his manufactory. When she learned

that he employed some fifty or sixty hands, the hope arose within her that Alfred might be permitted to work under the direction of so good a man. She told Mr. Davis the whole truth in regard to her brother, not without deep emotion, in which both Mr. and Mrs. Davis strongly sympathized. Mr. Davis was a man of prompt action. "Let him come to me, I have a place that will suit him already vacant," said he, "and Miss Rosedale, come down yourself to-morrow if your father can walk so far to accompany you, and I will gladly show you both my plan in regard to business. Of this you may be sure, your brother will have no possible inducement to return to his previous habits while on my

premises. I have seen too much of the evil of drunkenness, to allow anything of the kind there." Alice thanked him with a grateful heart. "But Mr. Davis," said she, "I have another favour to ask of you, and that is, to converse with my brother upon the subject of religion, for I am sure that he is now agitating the question in his own mind." "I will try to secure his good will and confidence in the first place," said he, "and then I should be neglecting a plain Christian duty to be indifferent to his highest good. Should I not, little missionary?"

As Alice gazed, smilingly through the tears that dimmed the lustre of her bright eyes, at the kind old gentleman, whose fine face, lighted



up by real benevolence of soul, was far more attractive than youth and any amount of beauty can ever make a face where this virtue does not exist; she felt thankful to God, that in this world of selfishness and eager desire for gain, some such examples as the one before her are permitted to dwell, to show that the business does not degrade the man, but the man the business.

Mr. Rosedale and Alice were delighted to behold the perfect order in which everything moved at Mr. Davis's manufactory. They saw at a glance that he was universally beloved by his men, and yet that his word was law.

Alfred manifested no interest in the matter. A sullen despair seemed

to pervade all his actions. He went to his work mechanically, laboured well while there, Mr. Davis said, and returned with the same measured tread; oh, how painfully unlike the bounding elasticity of virtuous youth!

In one respect only did he seem to exercise any will of his own; he insisted that his wages should be paid to his father. That was certainly hopeful, thought Alice, yet her heart ached for him, when she beheld him from day to day returning from his work so utterly devoid of joy. He had been employed by Mr. Davis more than three months before the latter could induce him to attend church and Sabbath-school. But this event was an era in the life

of the unhappy youth. He was placed in a class of young men conducted by Charles Willard, a youth of nearly his own age, who had long been a devoted Christian, and was almost prepared for the ministry. This young man was at once attracted by the suffering face of Alfred, and having so constant a source of joy in his own bosom, he felt the most ardent desire that his young friend might drink at the same inexhaustible fountain. In a short time he won the respect and confidence of the desponding youth, and then Alfred frankly confessed to him that he believed the doctrines that he had been taught from his youth, from the Bible and Catechism to be substantially true; "yet" said

he, "they do not seem to me to be right. The doctrine of election, as taught by your church, is so incomprehensible to me, that I would fain think you were in error, until I turn to the Bible, and there I find it expressed as strongly. What shall I do? It is this that staggers me."

"With the doctrine of election," replied his friend, "you have now just nothing to do. You must admit that God has a perfect right to do as he will with the creatures which his own hand has made, yet I repeat you have nothing to do with the matter at present. God says, if any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine. It is now your duty to do the will of God." "What is it?" exclaimed Alfred,

eagerly, "O if I could know and do it!" "You can, my friend," said his teacher; "it is simply this, 'repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;' The promise is sure." Light and truth faintly dawned in the hitherto dark mind. Mr. Willard, seeing his situation, bowed at the mercy-seat in prayer. Alfred kneeled by his side, and ere they arose from their knees, another soul was born into the kingdom. "There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth," and there was joy in the hearts of these two young friends as they left Mr. Willard's apartment, and went out under the starry heavens that night. Long they walked, arm in arm, conversing upon

the wondrous plan for the rescue of fallen man. Oh if there is any thing lovely on earth it is a friendship like that of these two young men! Reaching forward, it oversteps the bounds of time and anticipates an eternal and ever-increasing state of holy love beyond the grave. This gives zest to every passing pleasure, and Alfred Rosedale, after wandering so long in the forbidden paths of worldly amusements, felt himself suddenly elevated to a sphere so high and ennobling that it seemed almost heaven begun below.

It was late when he returned to his home that night, and the family had retired to rest. He repaired to his own apartment, but not to sleep.

His mind was too much occupied with joy and gratitude, for repose, and he spent the night in praise and thanksgiving.

In the morning he descended to the breakfast room, just in season for prayers, and there he told the delighted family all that God had done for his soul. Although they had been praying long and earnestly for this very blessing, they were not prepared for an answer so full of peace. The aged father lifted up his voice and wept, as he exclaimed, "This my son was dead and is alive again; was lost, and is found."

Alfred entreated them to forgive his past offences, and asked them to pray that he might have strength given him from above to lead a

Christian life. Alone with his sister, he said, "O Alice, had it not been for your kindness and your love, I believe the good seed sown by our precious mother would have been lost. Your example was something that I could not explain, except by referring to a higher motive power than I had ever known experimentally." "Give all the honour and praise of your salvation unto our God, my brother," replied Alice; "he sometimes employs very feeble instruments in his works of mercy."



## CHAPTER V.

## MISSIONARY LABOUR AT HOME.

MRS. MERTON, Miss Day, and Alice Rosedale met frequently for consultation respecting the religious interests of Herbvale, as the squalid little village was called; yet they went separately to their work, provided with tracts and little picture books for children. The first call of Alice was at a poor little hovel where she found a girl about fifteen years of age taking care of a sickly babe. Upon inquiry, she found that the mother of the child was dead, and that its elder sister had

been its only nurse since the little sufferer was born. The father was addicted to intemperance. This slender girl contrived to earn a scanty livelihood for the family by weaving baskets. There were two other children, not yet old enough to assist poor Hannah, except in the berry season, when they could earn a small sum each day. Alice was at once interested in the quiet, care-worn girl. She took the babe in her arms, sat down by her side, and spoke to her of her mother. Tears started into the eyes of the girl, whose seemed unused to kindness. Little by little, Alice won her way into her heart. She could neither read nor write. Alice asked her if she would try to learn, provided she



“This slender girl contrived to earn a scanty livelihood for the family by weaving baskets. p. 138.

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should come to instruct her every Saturday afternoon. Hannah said it was what she long had wished. After telling her of Him who said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," Alice took her leave.

Oh there is something in the gospel particularly applicable to cases like this! So little happiness had this poor girl on earth, that she eagerly caught at the hope of joy in the world to come. The seed that was scattered there, was sown on good ground. Hannah had always been a thoughtful girl. She was ignorant, but she desired to know the way of life.

Alice called on eight large families that first afternoon. Some of these

could read, some could not. Of the latter a few promised to meet her on the next Saturday afternoon. Alice shrank not from the severe task of teaching those ignorant children their alphabet, and she had her reward; for her kind manner attracted more children than she had hoped for, and she made it a point to speak to them plainly and simply of the great truths of the Bible. Hannah Wood made astonishing progress in her studies. At the close of the first summer she could read tolerably, and had made some progress in writing. The other ladies had the satisfaction of drawing out the children without opposition from the parents, and the work of instruction prospered. Mr.

Davis was highly delighted at the success of his scheme. "Next summer," said he, "Providence permitting, we will have a school over there." In the mean time winter was rapidly approaching, yet would not the ladies think of giving up their labour of love. A widow woman, who feared the Lord, lived in the midst of this moral wilderness. She offered her small, but neat room for the school during the winter.

Mr. Davis commissioned Charles Willard to take his carriage and drive the ladies to Herbvale every Saturday afternoon. The children all assembled and quite filled the little room. Mr. Willard opened the school with a most fervent prayer, clothed in language so

simple that these poor ignorant little ones could understand, and then withdrew to leave the ladies alone with their charge. Of Hannah, Alice had a trembling hope that she was a Christian, yet she thought it would be best not to be too hasty in expressing such a belief to the girl.

Occasionally some of the parents dropped in, and were never permitted to depart without a friendly invitation to come to Jesus. They began to ask that some of the people might come over and hold a prayer meeting in their neighbourhood. Soon after the little place was thrown into consternation by the wretched death of poor little Hannah's father. He was run over



by a railroad train while intoxicated, and instantly killed. Inebriates were aroused for the moment, and Alfred Rosedale could hesitate no longer. "I am a brand plucked from the burning," exclaimed he. "I will go over, it may be that some poor drunkard will listen to me." No one attempted to restrain him. Mr. Davis and Mr. Willard accompanied him, and it was wonderful to hear the eloquence and pathos of his address. Attention was aroused; three or four young men came up to the speaker, and declared their intention of abandoning their cups immediately. That was not all. The door was now fairly opened for these earnest Christians. Charles and Alfred left their own church in

the afternoons and went over to speak to them from full hearts. The message was heard, the Spirit was given in answer to prayer, and many were converted to God. In the midst of his rejoicing, Mr. Davis knew the work was but half done.

“They must have some steady employment,” exclaimed he, “or they will relapse into their old habits of robbing hen roosts and orchards. I will think the matter over.” With this good man thought was action. There was a simple article of his trade which was in great demand, but which could be easily made, and as he thought of this his plan was formed. He put up a very simple workshop over in Herbvale, and gave it into the care

of Alfred Rosedale. He provided material, arranged the prices of labour, and stipulated the number of hands to be engaged in the work. The wages were not high, but Alfred succeeded in impressing upon the minds of many of the men the advantages of steady labour, and the shop was filled. It required no little tact to manage so many new and undisciplined labourers, but Alfred soon proved that he possessed superior powers in this respect. He managed the business so well that Mr. Davis was more than satisfied ; he was delighted. His kind heart glowed with honest pleasure at the result of his plan.

Herbvale in the succeeding summer was quite another place. Alfred

encouraged all the men to cultivate vegetable gardens, and Alice suggested to the women that their little cots might be made attractive by flowers. She gave them seeds and roots from her father's large store, and the wilderness began to blossom as the rose.

A plain edifice was erected, in part by contributions for the purpose, and every Sabbath afternoon the young men of Mr. Harrowby's church went over and held a prayer meeting there. A good female teacher was engaged for the week, and the children were induced to attend school regularly. The men forsook their cups, and the women gave more attention to their households. Alfred Rosedale became very

dear to the people. Mr. Davis had a plan for him. One day he called him to him. "Alfred," said he, "the shop over there is yours; here is a bill of sale of the place. It has cost me comparatively nothing, yet it is no mean commencement for you." Nor was it. The business prospered under his discreet management, and was extended gradually until Alfred Rosedale stood at the head of a large manufacturing establishment. Other trades were attracted to the spot, and, its natural advantages being good, Herbvale soon became a thrifty village. The unsightly little hovels were by degrees removed, and tidy, substantial dwellings succeeded them.

The love of this reformed inebriate

for the place of his adoption was ardent in the extreme, and he was unwearied in his efforts for its improvement. So strong was his influence in favour of temperance, that no liquor dealer could be sustained there, and drunkenness was almost unknown. Life then was full of usefulness and happiness for Alfred. He looked back upon the past with sorrow for his misspent years, and with joy for his deliverance from the snares of the adversary. To the future he turned with trembling hope, for he did not trust in his own strength for preservation from a relapse into his old habits ; but all his trust was in Him who is able to succour the tempted. Active employment preserved him from many

evils, but often he felt his strength to be perfect weakness, and at such seasons he knew the blessedness of having a strong refuge unto which he might continually resort. His aged father rejoiced in seeing his son a useful and respected member of society, and Alice was happy in the prosperity of her only brother; but there was one member of the household who felt more than a fatherly or sisterly interest in the success of the young man. Ella Maxwell had watched his earnest efforts in the path of duty with many a prayer for his protection from evil, and the youth had not been insensible to her kind expostulation when danger threatened, or to her words of encouragement after some signal

victory. Her influence over him had been highly beneficial, and gratitude on the part of the youth soon ripened into a deeper sentiment. There was an earthly hope in his heart which irradiated the future—a quiet home in Herbvale, with his much respected friend for a companion, a peaceful asylum for the declining years of his venerable parent, and a resting place for his beloved sister.

Toward this end his daily labours tended, yet neither Ella nor his relatives suspected that such was his deeply laid plan. He wished to convince the object of his affections that he was worthy to be trusted, before he besought her to confide her worldly happiness to his keeping. Meanwhile Ella was labour-



ing incessantly to supply the defects of her education, and that which mere industry could not accomplish was conquered by earnest prayer and corresponding effort, and it was a joyful day for Alice when Ella, two years later, with beaming eyes, informed her that she had so far triumphed over her difficulties as to possess the qualifications for a common school teacher. "And now, dear Alice," said she, "I can be burdensome to you no longer. I am going away, as soon as I can obtain a situation, and God will some time enable me to repay the debt of gratitude I owe to you and your family." "You can repay it without taking all that trouble," said a well-known voice behind her; and turning, the earnest

gaze of Alfred Rosedale met her eyes. Alice, casting an arch look at Ella, quickly absented herself, and when the family next met, Alfred presented the tearful, blushing Ella to his father and sister as his affianced bride.

A neat and tasteful dwelling was erected upon the banks of a picturesque little stream in Herbvale, all the surroundings of which strongly resembled the former home of the Rosedales at Riverside. The lofty elms and the grand mountain scenery were wanting, yet was the place beautiful in its tastefully arranged grounds, flowering shrubbery, and silvery fountains. To this beautiful home Alfred Rosedale, six years after the departure from Riverside,

took his aged father, his sister, and his bride. The table was laid for tea, and the hour for the evening devotions had arrived. The family Bible was placed in the trembling hands of the aged saint, who read aloud the following passages: "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations. Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it. I have been young and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread. So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. O satisfy us early with thy mercy that we may be glad and rejoice all our days. Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast

afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children." He closed the book, and a tear stole down his furrowed cheek. He was thinking of the departed. Then the others commenced to chant the beautiful twenty-third psalm. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul, he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea though I walk through the valley and shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in

the presence of mine enemies ; thou anointest my head with oil ; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life ; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

That evening was a scene of family joy with which the stranger intermeddled not. From its pure and holy influences strength was derived for the active duties of the real life on which the youthful pair had entered. Happy in each other, and paying the most devoted attention to their aged parent, Alfred and Ella did not allow their charity to end at home. Much had already been done in Herbvale—much remained to be done. Influential members of society as they were,

their whole example must be worthy of the religion they professed. The erring and the destitute must be sought out, the afflicted must be visited, and above all the people must enjoy the stated means of grace. A church edifice must be erected, and a pastor called to break unto the people the bread of life. Sabbath-school instruction had prepared the way, and Alfred entered the work of organizing a religious society with but few misgivings as to its ultimate success. Still he found much more opposition, coldness, and indifference than he expected, and it was no little labour to remove prejudices and prepare the way for the union of the people in one religious denomination.

Meanwhile the Sabbath-school

and the prayer-meeting flourished. Ella and Alice laboured side by side in every good work. Charles Willard had been absent some time on a missionary tour in a distant part of the country. He felt that this work was an excellent preparation for the duties of the ministry. Alfred's friendship for him was unabated. It was his earnest wish that his friend might become his pastor. Great was his disappointment therefore, when to his urgent request that Mr. Willard would bear Herbvale in mind before accepting a call elsewhere, he replied that present duties would engross his attention for many months, after which it would be necessary for him to visit Europe on important busi-

ness for his father. At the same time he recommended to his attention one of his class mates, Mr. Anson, a young man of respectable talents and fervent piety. This gentleman answered Alfred's appeal by coming in person to Herbvale, and commencing his labours by preaching in the town hall. During the week he was untiring in his attentions to the sick and afflicted, and little children were speedily won by his real love for them, and the interest he manifested in their studies and amusements. So well did he please the people that he had not been with them three months ere they gave him a unanimous call to become their pastor. He endeavoured conscientiously to preach



the whole truth contained in the gospel; and to hide self behind that truth. There was a charm attending such preaching which attracted even those who differed from him in doctrine. In a short time the church was finished, and great joy was manifested when the solemn bell first awaked the echo of the forest. A high school was soon established and Alice Rosedale accepted the situation of principal. Her influence over her class of young ladies in Mr. Harrowby's Sabbath-school had been such that some of their parents immediately placed their daughters under her tuition. A large field of usefulness then opened before this faithful teacher, which she exerted all her powers

to improve to the utmost. The result of all her labours cannot be known on earth, but many cheering cases of youthful consecration came under her observation. Among these she had the sweet satisfaction of seeing her entire Sabbath-school class active members of the church of Christ.

For two years she laboured in this new sphere, almost forgetting that she had duties to perform in regard to her bodily health. Afterwards she felt that it was even sinful for her to be so utterly regardless of this great blessing. Wearied nature demanded repose, and no repose did the active teacher allow herself until she was prostrated upon a bed of sickness. Then in weariness and

anguish of body she tossed restlessly from side to side, delirious and distressed. Sometimes she conversed rationally upon various subjects, and her friends received comforting replies to their inquiries concerning her frame of mind, but when she recovered all was a blank ; she had no recollection of anything that had taken place in her illness. As health slowly returned, a new trial awaited her. Her father had long been slowly declining, but so constant and joyful was his communion with the Father of his spirit, that his aged countenance always wore an expression of holy joy, which prevented the appearance of bodily suffering. He was passing to the grave as corn fully ripe for the

harvest. His hoary head gave solemnity to the words he was continually speaking for Jesus. There was no terror in a death like his. He took his evening meal with the family, and conducted the devotions as usual. All present were impressed with the deep spirituality and fervour of his prayer. Alice assisted him to his chamber, and lingered fondly to arrange everything for his comfort. He entreated her to retire to seek the rest her feeble frame so much needed, and then drawing her tenderly toward him as he bade her good night, he said, "You have been a precious treasure to your father, my daughter; remember the words of your Saviour, 'Be thou faithful unto death and I

will give thee a crown of life.' ” Alice left him rather unwillingly, as he appeared more feeble than usual, and often during the evening, she ran up stairs to listen at the door of his room. At one time she heard him engaged in earnest prayer. It was not an hour later that she passed by his door on the way to her own apartment, and as all was quiet she stepped softly into the room, shielding with her hand the rays of the night lamp from the eyes of the sleeper. Useless precaution ! for those eyes were for ever veiled from earthly scenes—the spirit had fled. Death had done its work so gently that it had left only the appearance of a peaceful sleep. And such it was. Throughout the Bible death

is thus spoken of to those who believe.

“ Asleep in Jesus ; blessed sleep,  
From which none ever wakes to weep ;  
A calm and undisturbed repose  
Unbroken by the last of foes.”

At Riverside his earthly remains sleep calmly by the side of his unforgotten lost one, until the morning of the resurrection.

“ Their flesh shall slumber in the ground  
Till the last trumpet’s joyful sound ;  
Then burst the chains with sweet surprise,  
And in their Saviour’s image rise.”

## CHAPTER VI.

## CONCLUSION.

A STEAMER was dancing proudly across the blue waters of the Mediterranean on its return voyage from Syria to England. The day had been warm and sultry, but the evening breezes were cool and refreshing. Nearly all the passengers were on deck to enjoy the beauties of the sunset hour. Deeply absorbed in watching the gorgeous coloring of the clouds, a gentleman and lady stood a little apart from the group. They were still in the prime of life, although here and there a silvery

thread revealed itself amid the dark hair of the gentleman, and his countenance bore the impress of feeble health. They were returning from a missionary station in Syria, on account of the failing health of Mr. Willard. The lady, whose countenance, even amid the cares of middle life, had not lost the chief charm of her girlhood, was our friend Alice. For ten years she had been patiently toiling by the side of her husband in that far-off land, strengthening him for duty by her heartfelt sympathy and indomitable courage, and when with aching hearts they were obliged to relinquish their beloved field of labour, it was still her care to sooth and quiet the troubled mind of the



invalid. Two little graves they left behind them, in which two sweet infant daughters had been laid with many tears to their dreamless sleep. One little son, of two summers, was then sleeping in the arms of Hannah Wood, who had become so tenderly attached to Alice, that she could not brook the idea of a separation, and who applied herself with such diligence to her studies that she was sent out to Syria as a teacher. A tried and faithful friend she proved herself to be in every emergency. Two years after the death of Mr. Rosedale, Charles Willard visited Herbvale. He had just returned from England, where he had faithfully executed the trust confided to him by his father. It was at that

time, after having been introduced to many of the first families of the old country, for his ancestors were some of these, that he made choice of the unassuming Alice Rosedale as his companion for life. He had watched her day by day, in the faithful performance of the most common duties of life, as a daughter, a sister, a teacher, and a philanthropist in the highest sense. Never for a moment, had he seen her outside of her proper sphere of labour. Her attire was ever neat and becoming, but simple and inexpensive. He had seen her strict economy in the management of her father's household, and her large benevolence in every good cause. Being a man of sense, he was well aware that it

would be impossible for her to be so systematic in the latter without constant attention to the former. As a whole he had seen her endeavouring to bring her conduct up to the standard of the word of God, and although some failures were visible to his eye, and oh! how many more to her own consciousness, he rightly judged that he must look far for a more consistent life. Her mental riches, he felt, were immeasurably beyond any amount of mere personal beauty, as they increase in value by constant use, while beauty soon decays. On the other hand, he was not attracted by the outside glitter of mere accomplishments. Of the etiquette of fashionable life, she was almost

wholly ignorant. She felt that life was too real, too earnest, too short, to be frittered away at the toilette, the piano, elaborate embroidery, or in the crowded ball-room. It is true she was a highly skilled musician, and her thorough knowledge of that sublime art and one other, enabled her to furnish a comfortable home for her father and brother in their days of adversity. But her practice was confined to a stated portion of each day, and for the time her whole attention was given to it as to a pressing duty. Added to this, there had never been any effort on her part to attract attention. Were young ladies aware that this can never have any other effect upon the minds of those they most wish

to please than to produce disgust, it is believed that during their school days and early womanhood, their attention would be more generally confined to their studies, and that they would think less of the extravagant adornment of their persons, and more of the real ornament of a well stored mind. Alice had then no particular preference for Herb-vale as a place of residence. Her father no longer required her attention, and her brother was happy in his rising family. She had been rather dispirited since the death of her father, and had sought direction to some new field of usefulness from above. Then she cast her care away, believing that she would be directed in the path of duty.

She was sitting, one evening, alone in her brother's parlour, (during a short visit of the latter and his family to Riverside,) when Charles Willard entered unannounced. Alice rose to receive him with the sincere cordiality and unembarrassment which had ever characterized her acquaintance with him, and, deeply regretting her brother's absence, endeavoured to make his visit as agreeable as possible, and to prove to him that he was really welcome to her brother's home. When she ascertained that his visit had special reference to herself, it cannot be denied that a matter so important caused her much trepidation, but she was soon as calm and collected as before,

when Mr. Willard proposed that they should unite in prayer that they might receive divine direction in this eventful period, and then, rising to depart, requested her to inform him of her decision by letter after giving the subject due consideration. This was the commencement of a friendship, as pure, as lasting and as precious as has ever beautified this world of ours since the exodus of our first parents from Eden. A year later and their work had been appointed them, and Mr. and Mrs. Willard were on their way to the Holy Land. With what emotions did they press the sod over which their Redeemer, in the days of his flesh, had passed before them! It gave them a new impulse in their

labours amid the worse than heathenish darkness of the place of their mission. A happy home was theirs, as happy as it well could be amid the vicissitudes of this changing life, and when they were obliged to leave their home, their work, and the graves of their children, to return no more, both felt it to be the deepest sorrow of their lives.

Yet in that calm evening on the Mediterranean, with the beautiful canopy above them and the restless waters underneath, they were inspired with fresh hope and courage. "You will revive again in the air of your native land, my husband, and our Father may have yet an important work for you there," said Alice. And her words were prophetic. The



air of England, where they spent a few months with relatives, seemed to revive his failing strength, and they embarked in a homeward bound steamer with bright hopes for the future. They were approaching Newfoundland when a dense fog enveloped the vessel, and the captain knew that they were not far distant from dangerous shoals. Every precaution was taken for their safety, but a fearful storm arose, and the vessel was wrecked. O the horror of that hour when death was staring the affrighted mariners in the face ! Oaths were exchanged for prayers for mercy. The hardened and unconcerned were pale with terror, and some were rushing wildly from place to place in the

fast-sinking vessel, as if bereft of reason. In that terrible hour, Mr. and Mrs. Willard stood hand in hand upon the deck, deeply affected, yet calmly trusting in the Lord. The little boy was firmly lashed to his father, and with life preservers securely fastened, they awaited the fearful moment when the frail wreck must be deserted. "If this ocean is to be our grave," said Mrs. Willard, "it is sweet, my husband, to go home together." "And the passage will be short to our Saviour's mansion," replied her husband. Did they regret in that solemn hour any sacrifices that they had ever made for God? No! They rather felt had they a thousand lives, they would give them all away for the privilege

of labouring for Him who had so loved them as to redeem them with his precious blood. He who is mighty to save, interposed with his strong arm; he rolled away the clouds, the winds abated, the sinking fragment of a vessel was stayed until the boats could be got out and manned, and although the breakers made the passage to shore dangerous in the extreme, yet they all reached land with their lives, a short time before the wreck went down. Nothing was saved from the wreck; many had lost their all, as was the case with our missionaries, yet grateful hearts poured forth ascriptions of praise that dreary night on the shores of Newfoundland for the blessing of life.

A few days later and a joyful group were assembled in Alfred Rosedale's parlor. The wreck of the steamer had been reported, and not the number of the saved. Great anxiety had been felt as to the safety of their friends, which had been relieved by their arrival.

The children seized the little Charlie and rejoiced over him as only children can, while their seniors had much of mutual interest to relate.

"Charles," said his friend, "you have returned at precisely the right time. You once refused a call to settle in Herbvale, but I hope you will not do so again. We are without a pastor. Our beloved Mr. Anson breathed his last yesterday. He

has been faithful in every good word and work until the last hour, but he has passed away, and we cannot recall him. He has gone up higher. My friend, there is a great work to do in our growing town. The attention of the careless is aroused, and the church is praying for a blessing. Even now are their prayers partly answered, for you have been rescued from a watery grave to help forward this good work."

And so it was. On the next day Mr. Willard addressed the deeply solemn crowd assembled to pay the last sad rites to their beloved pastor, and they felt that he had received an unction from above. The Spirit was poured out, sinners were awak-

ened, and everywhere the earnest cry was heard, "What must I do to be saved?" Mr. Willard received, and immediately gave an affirmative answer to a call to settle with the people as their pastor. And there were they, at home again, with their dearly beloved people, and under circumstances the most cheering that can be presented to the Christian heart. It was hard work for them to meet all the calls upon their time, but they laboured joyfully in the blessed work. Mrs. Willard immediately gathered around her the anxious of her own sex, and thus the arduous toils of her husband were relieved. The faithful Hannah Wood was a most welcome assistant to Mrs. Willard, both at

home and in her labours abroad. Her heart was filled with joy, for among the earliest converts were her two brothers, who had been apprenticed to trades during her absence. For months the work was increasing. Help was implored from the neighbouring churches, and freely granted. The church at Herbvale received large accessions. It was a solemn day, when one hundred persons, mostly youth, stood up and took the vows of God upon them, as the first fruits of this revival.

The parsonage at Herbvale was a beautiful dwelling in a lovely situation. Mrs. Anson had carefully cultivated the rarest flowers around the house, but the circumstance

which most endeared it to Alice, was the fact that it stood on the exact site of the poor widow's cottage in which she had laboured as a Sabbath-school missionary in her girlhood. It was one delightful evening in the summer succeeding their return, that Mr. and Mrs. Willard sat alone on the piazza of their dwelling, enjoying the glories that surrounded them. The full moon was rising in the east, casting its mellow beams over the landscape; stars twinkled faintly in the azure sky. The breeze that fanned their cheeks came laden with the rich perfume of the honeysuckle, and other fragrant flowers around them, and the scene was so calm, so peaceful and so beautiful that for some



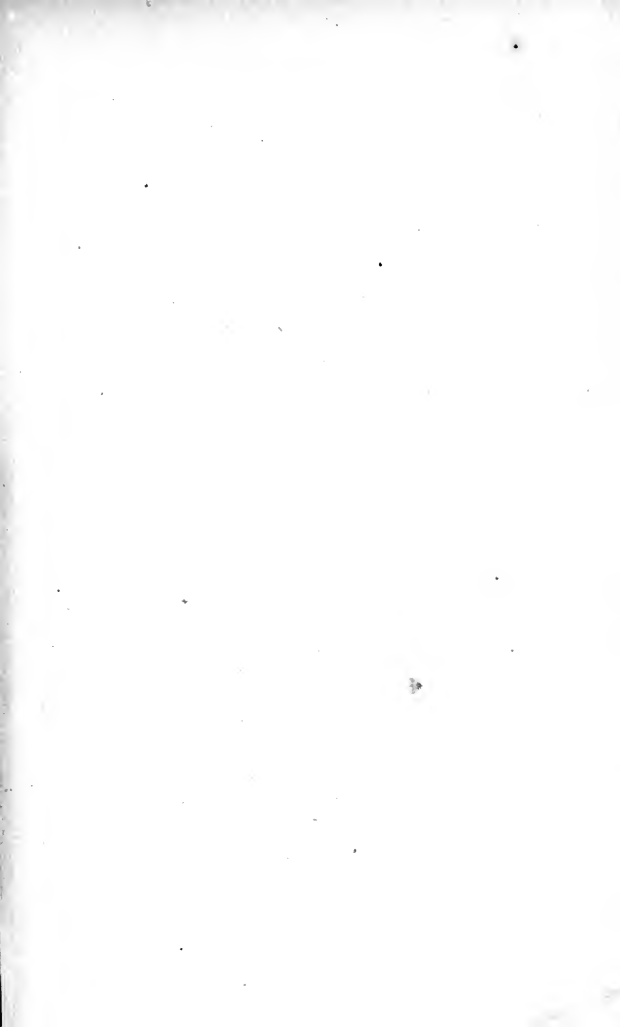
time neither spoke, completely absorbed in its loveliness and the melting reminiscences it awakened. Presently the clock on the church tower chimed forth the hour of nine. Awakening from his reverie Mr. Willard exclaimed, "Surely the lines have fallen to us in pleasant places; this is a sweet place to rest, my Alice." "Yes," she replied, "and a sweet place to labour also." "Labour is rest in this world," replied her husband, "if it be labour for the good of souls to which you allude. We have seen enough of this world of change to know that it is not the place for tranquil rest. We must look higher for that. But it is a blessed privilege to live and labour for so good a Master as ours.

Our church, at present, is in a prosperous condition. It is easy to preach when the people are so ready to hear; but think you, we can labour as willingly and as earnestly when trials come? These new converts must be faithfully dealt with. The word of reproof must sometimes be given, as well as the smile of approval. Our motives may sometimes be misunderstood; will not that be disheartening?" "It should not be," replied his wife. "My life has led me through deep trials and bright joys, but I must say to the praise of Him who has been my support, that no condition can be miserable to the Christian. I can imagine how it might be perfectly easy for the martyrs for the truth to sing

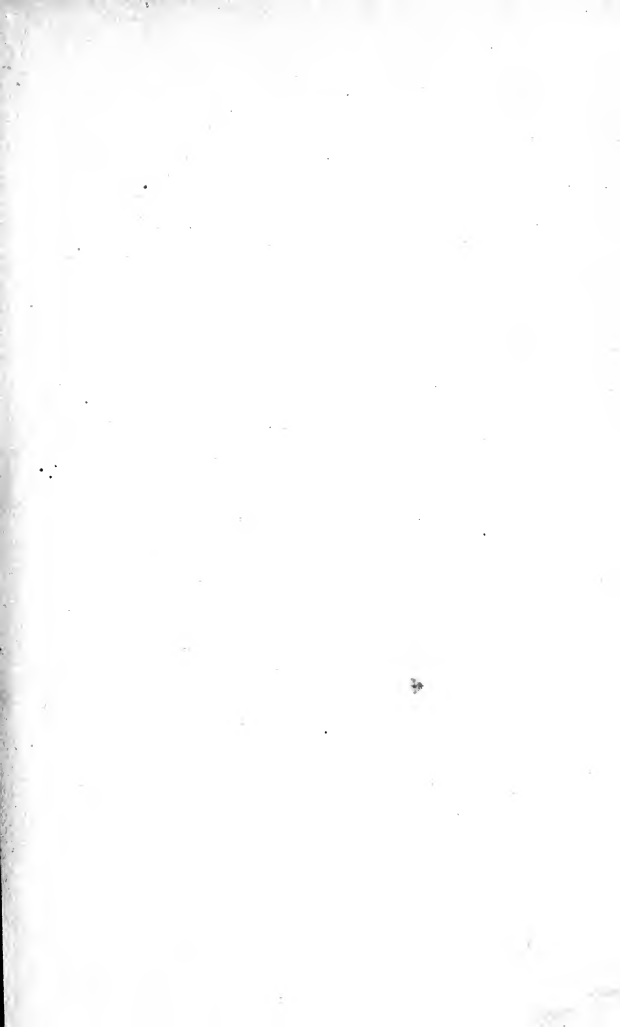
praises in the flames. Christ formed in the soul the hope of glory, rids one of self, and makes him see events only as they refer to his Master's praise. In that condition, trials and joys are alike acceptable, since they come from a loving Father's hand. This feeling of perfect resignation to the will of God relieves the Christian from the intense longing for the rest of heaven, which otherwise might be too strong for his usefulness. It gives its proper fleetness to the length of human life, and is contented to patiently await the end. That this is fast and surely approaching cannot be kept too strongly impressed upon the mind, therefore, let us work while it is day, knowing that

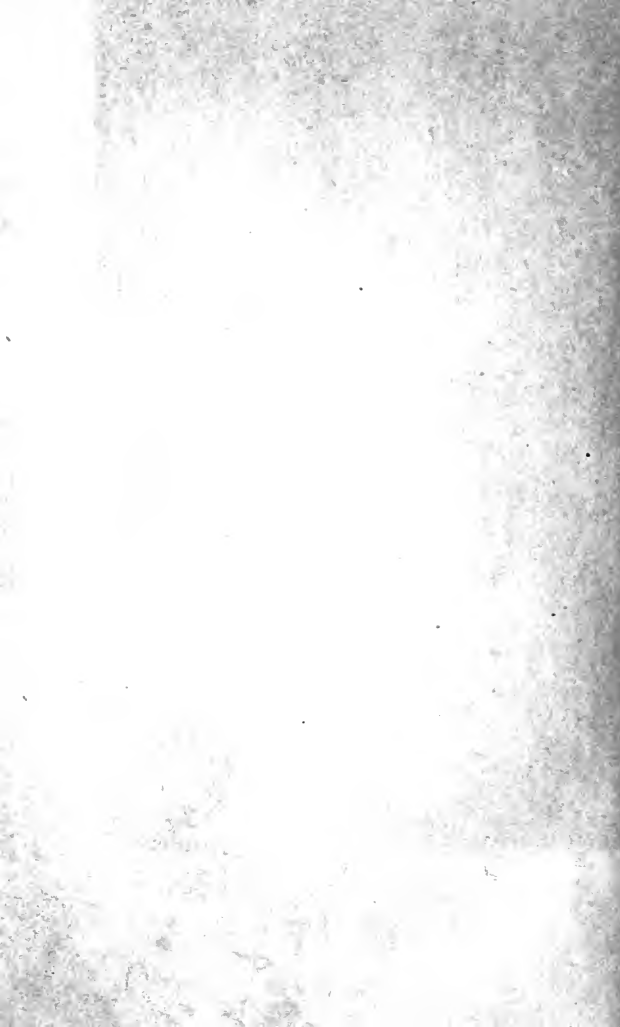
the night cometh in which no man can work."

In this spirit they lived and toiled, and God crowned their efforts with signal success. Yet when the last honest hour came, they each exclaimed with a full heart, "We are unprofitable servants, having done only what it was our duty to do. Not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy holy name, be ascribed the honour and glory of our salvation for ever and ever."















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